



The Snowflake Method

How To Design Your Novel Before You Write It
Or Redesign It After It's Written

Presented at ACFW, September 2011

Randy Ingermanson

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Boring Legal Shtuff

This presentation is copyright 2011, by Randy Ingermanson. The author reserves all rights, blah, blah, blah. Gack, I hate this kind of notice. Feel free to pass these notes out to your friends, but please don't sell them and I'll be happy. Since anyone can learn all about the Snowflake method for free on my web site at: www.AdvancedFictionWriting.com, it would be crazy to try to sell this stuff anyway.

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Administrative Details

- If you have a question that begins, “That was unclear; can you explain it better?” -- then feel free to ask it.
- If you have a question that begins, “Can you explain about this other topic _____?” -- then please hold that question.
- I’ll email a PDF file with all of these notes. Just print your name and email address on the sheet I’m passing around.

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Course Outline

- The Snowflake Method--an Overview
- Examples of One-Sentence Summaries
- Extended Example: The Hunger Games
- The Hot Seat: Selected Volunteers



Overview of the Snowflake Method

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Why Design?

Good fiction doesn't just happen, it is designed. You can do the design work before or after you write your novel. I've done it both ways. I believe that doing the design first is quicker, easier, and leads to a better result., at least for me.

In this section, I'll describe a design method that has made me famous around the world, the so-called Snowflake Method. The Snowflake is a process for organizing and analyzing your novel. It will not make you more creative or write your novel. It will get you organized before you write and help you analyze after you write. That's all.

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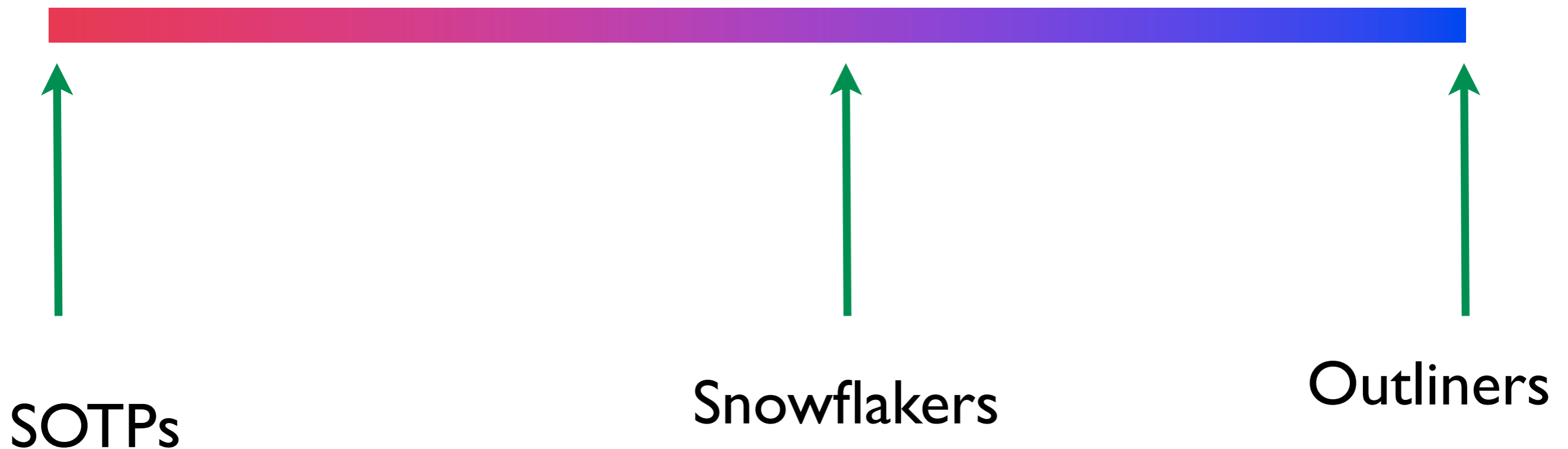
Different Styles of Writers

- ✍️ Seat of the pants writers (SOTPs):
 - 😊 Just start writing
 - 😊 Let it flow ...
 - 😊 If that's your style, then that's your style
- ✍️ Outliners:
 - ☢️ Figure it all out first
 - ☢️ Make a detailed plan of every scene
 - ☢️ If that's your style, then that's your style

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The Spectrum of Writers



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The Snowflake Method Can Help Everyone

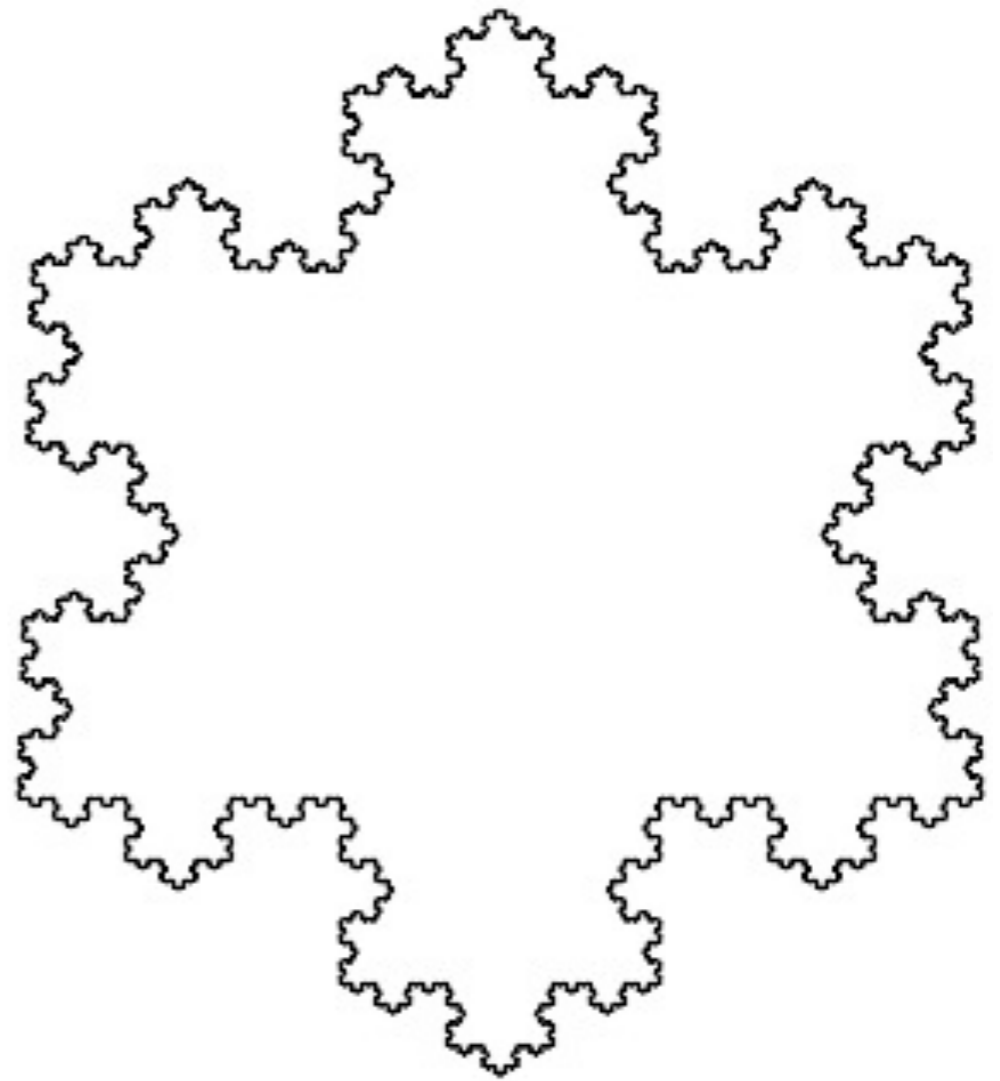
- ✍️ SOTPs can use the Snowflake to fix that sagging middle (after it's written).
- ✍️ Outliners can use the Snowflake to produce their outlines more quickly.
- ✍️ Those of us in between can use all or part of the Snowflake as we need to suit our own writing needs. The Snowflake is flexible!

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Can You Draw This Object?

Imagine trying to draw the image at right. It's beautiful, it's complex, and it's impossible to get right on the first try. This is the famous "Koch Snowflake," an important mathematical object.

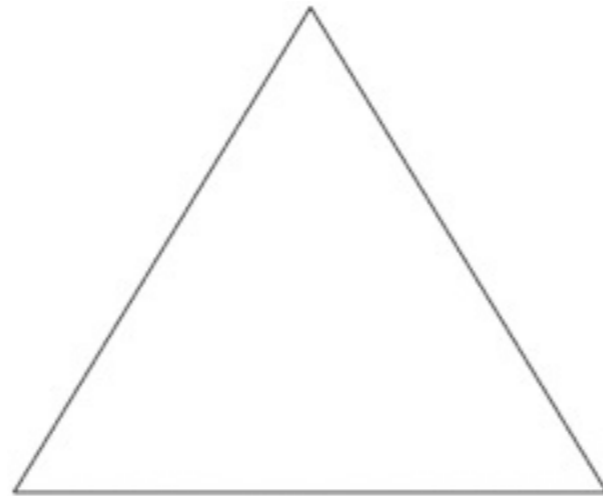


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How To Draw A Snowflake: Step 1

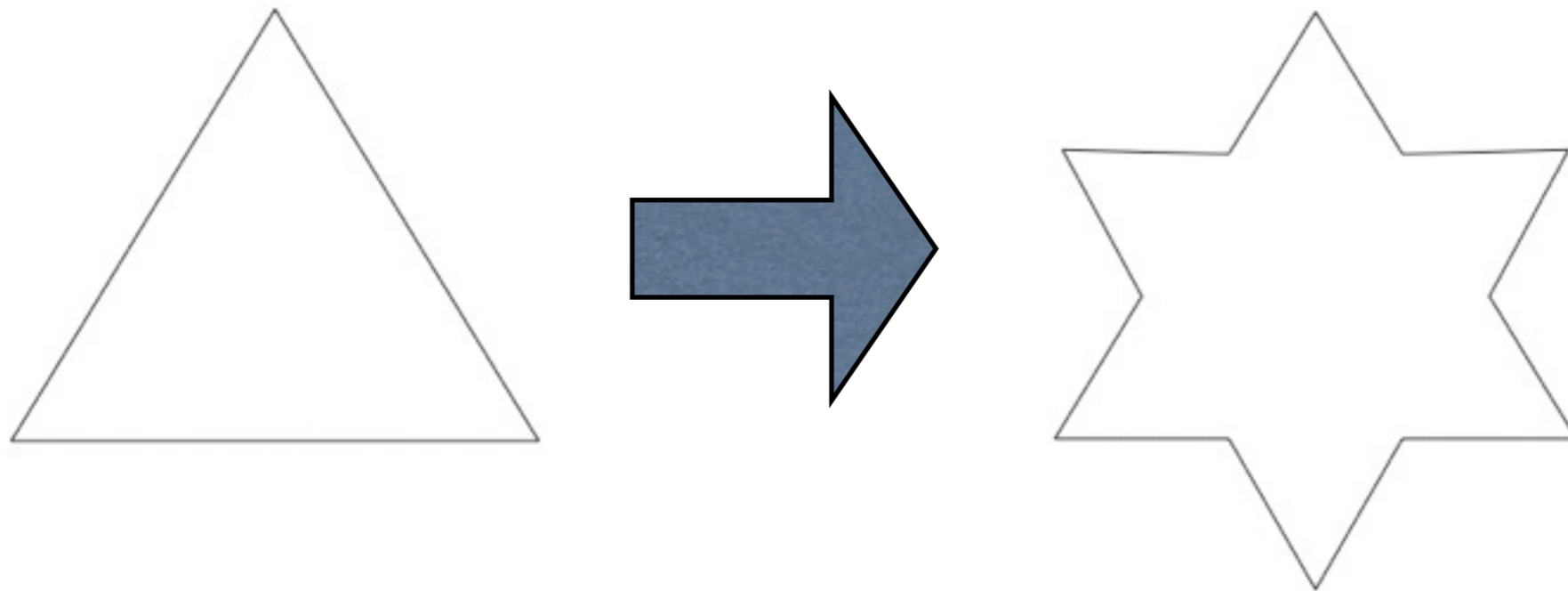
Start simple:



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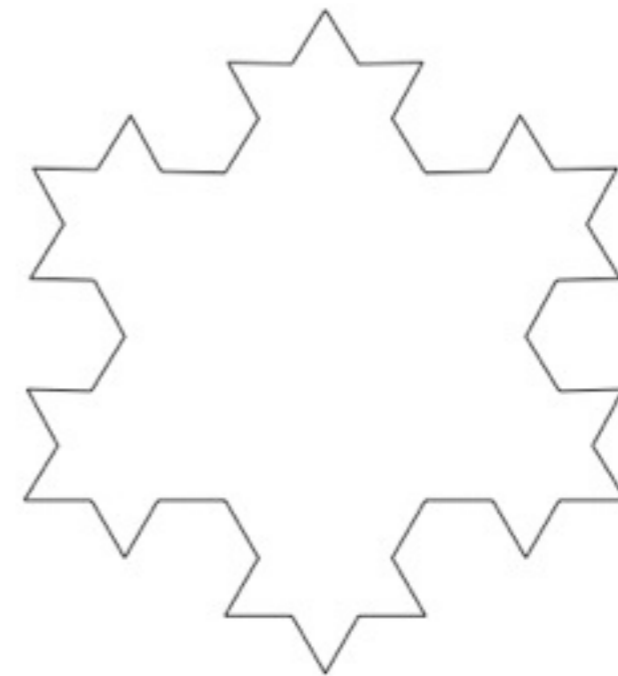
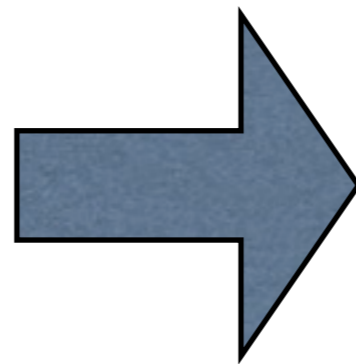
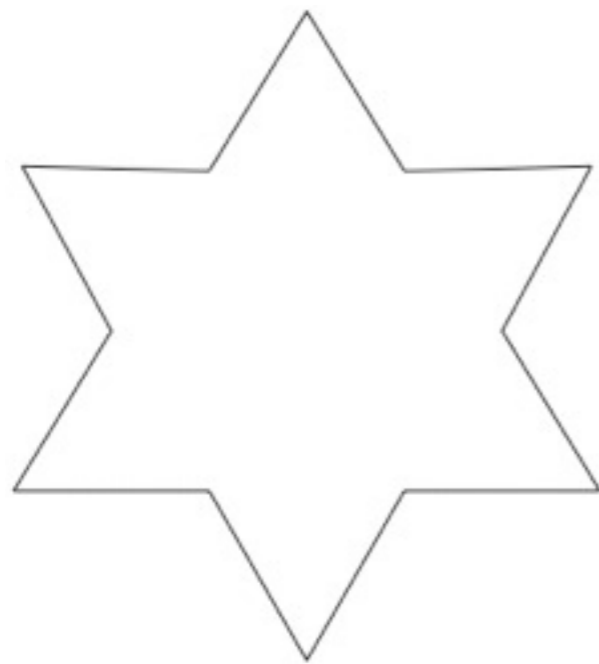
How To Draw A Snowflake: Step 2



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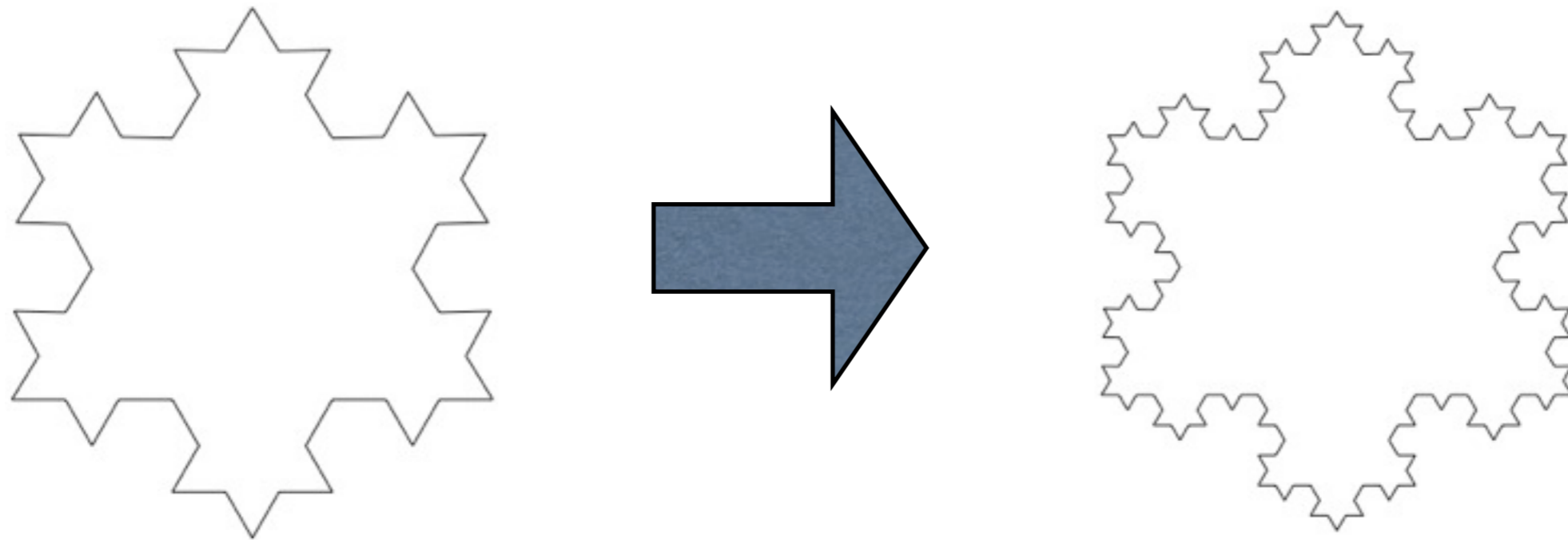
How To Draw A Snowflake: Step 3



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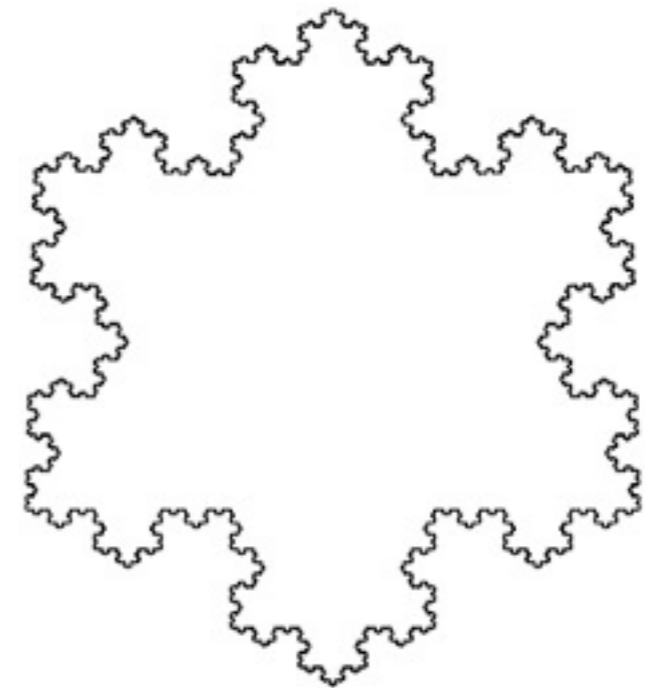
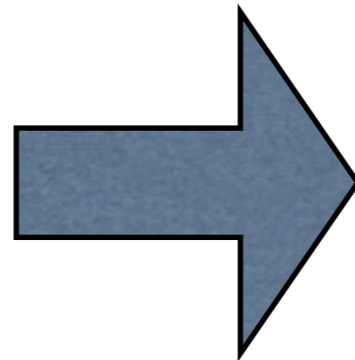
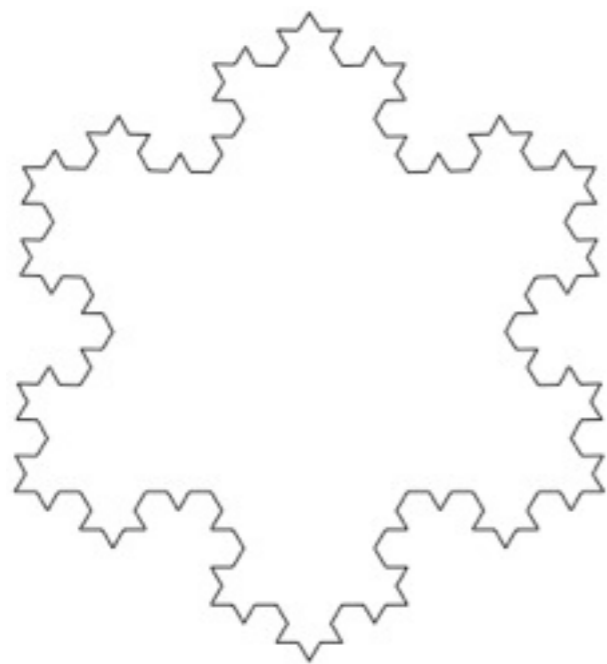
How To Draw A Snowflake: Step 4



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How To Draw A Snowflake: Step N



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A Novel is Like a Snowflake

- It has a large-scale structure.
- It has smaller-scale structure.
- It has “wheels within wheels.”
- At the lowest level, it seems almost chaotic.

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Design a Novel Like You Draw a Snowflake

- Start “small” with one central idea.
- Expand it out as you add more ideas.
- Keep going until the whole thing is written.

After the novel is written, analyze its structure the same way.

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Two Aspects to Writing Fiction

- Creation--inventing what does not exist.
 - Chaotic
 - Unpredictable
 - I won't teach you this!
- Analysis--breaking down what already exists.
 - Orderly
 - Predictable
 - I will teach you this!

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My Secret Life as a Designer

- I have many years experience writing software in my day job.
- The world of Software Engineering has figured out many techniques for organizing large and complex projects.
- I've stolen these techniques, adapted them for writing fiction, and named the resulting system the "Snowflake method."

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What Happens First--Composting

- When you get a great idea for a story, write it down!
- As time goes by, you'll get more ideas. Write those down too!
- Brainstorm with your friends. Write down what you come up with!
- Use various creativity techniques to flesh out your idea. Write it all down!

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Eventually, You Want to Start Writing

- But first, you need to get it organized.
- You need a story design.
- Your design should be written down, because
 - Your memory is fallible.
 - Writing it down exposes what's missing
- You need a Snowflake document.

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Step 1: The One-Sentence Summary

- Take an hour to write a one-sentence summary of the story.
- Example: “A rogue physicist travels back in time to kill the apostle Paul.”
- A selling tool you will use forever to interest editors, bookstore owners, and readers.

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The Selling Chain For a Book

- You sell your book idea to an editor.
- Editor sells it to the committee.
- Committee sells it to the sales team.
- Sales team sells it to bookstore buyers.
- Somebody sells it to the bookstore sales staff.
- Bookstore staff sell it to readers.
- Readers sell it to their friends.

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Tips For a Summary Sentence

- Shorter is better. Less than 15 words is best.
- Don't use character names, use characterizing descriptions.
- Tie together big picture and personal picture.
Who has the most to lose?
- Learn from the summaries in the New York Times bestseller list.

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Examples of One-Sentence Summaries

- A lonely high school girl discovers that the boy she has a crush on is a vampire--Twilight, Stephenie Meyer
- A disgraced Swedish muckraking journalist is offered 5 million kronor to solve a 37-year-old cold-case murder--The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo, Stieg Larsson

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Step 2: The One-Paragraph Summary

- One sentence to set the story up.
- One sentence for each of the three main disasters in the story.
- One sentence for the ending.

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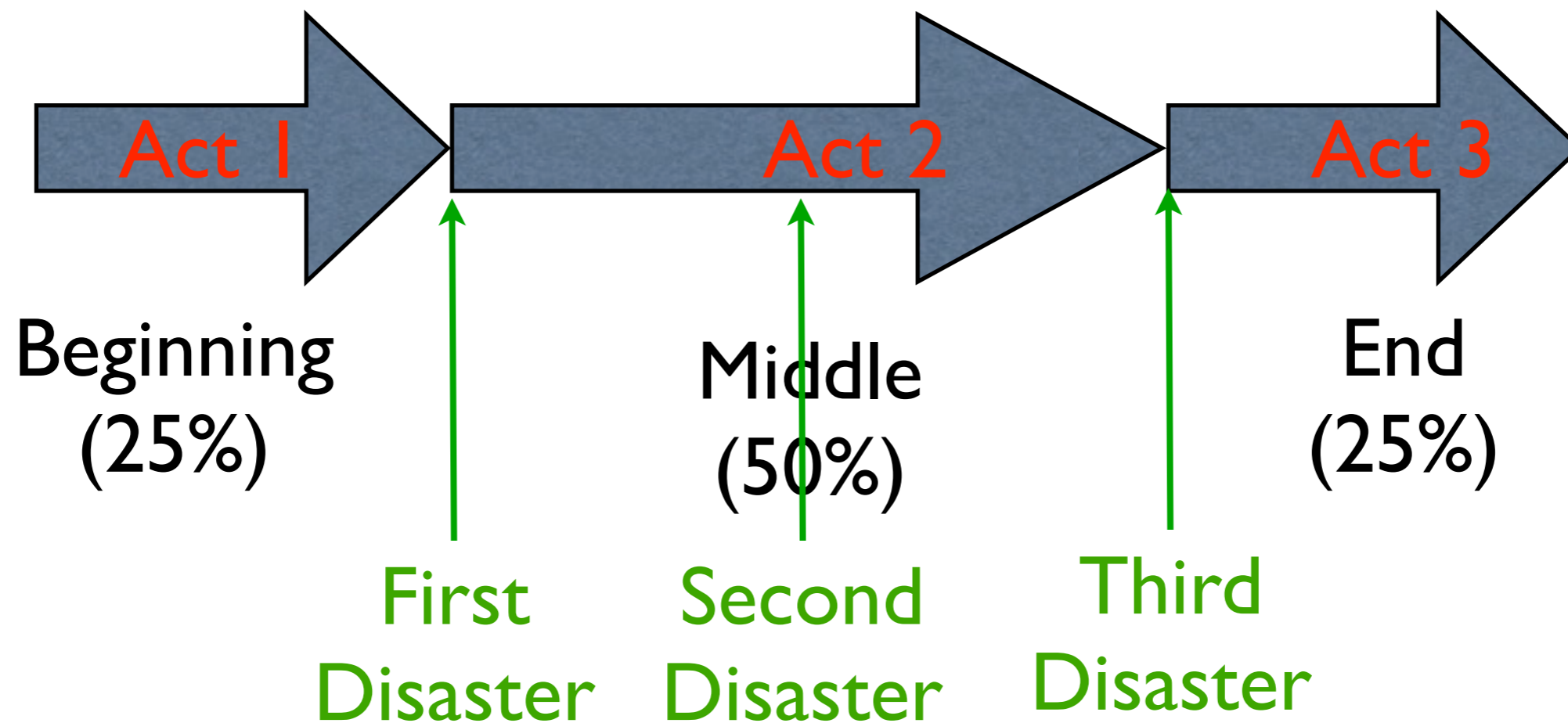
Review of Three Disaster Structure

- Roughly corresponds to the famous Three-Act Structure, but it's not quite the same.
- Three-Act Structure has a Beginning, Middle, and End. Makes clear the **large blocks** of the story.
- Three-Disaster Structure has three disasters evenly spaced through the book. Makes clear the **transition points** of the story.

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Three Act Structure/Three Disaster Structure



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Why You Need Those Pesky Disasters

- The first disaster forces your lead character to commit to the story; it connects the Beginning to the long Middle of the book
- The second disaster changes the direction of the story and prevents the Middle from sagging
- The third disaster forces your lead character and your antagonist to commit to a final confrontation; it connects the Middle to the End of your story

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Purpose of the One-Paragraph Summary

- Forms the core of the back-cover for your book, someday.
- Guarantees you have a good sound story structure.
- The second disaster eliminates the problem of the “sagging middle” that often kills Act 2.
- May help improve one-sentence summary.

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Example: Three Act Structure

Pride And Prejudice, Jane Austen

When Lizzie Bennet and her sisters meet some wealthy young men at a ball, Lizzie takes a keen dislike to one of them, Mr. Darcy. Lizzie's sister Jane falls in love with Darcy's friend Mr. Bingley, while Lizzie takes an interest in Mr. Wickham--whom she then learns has been financially ruined by Darcy. When Lizzie goes to visit her married friend in Hunsford some months later, Darcy seeks her out and proposes to her--and she rejects him flat out. Lizzie soon learns that Darcy is a far better man than she has given him credit for, and she is regretting her rejection when her sister runs away to live in sin with Mr. Wickham. When Lizzie learns that Mr. Darcy rescued her sister's reputation, and when he learns that she no longer hates him, they realize that after all, they were made for each other.

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Step 3: Character Summary Sheets

- Story is not about plot, it's about characters.
- Now need to do Steps 1 & 2 for the **personal story** of each character.

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Components of a Character Summary

- Character's name.
- One-sentence summary of the character's private storyline.
- Character's values
- Character's ambition (abstract).
- Character's goal (concrete).
- Character's conflict.
- Character's epiphany.
- One-paragraph summary of the character's

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What If It's Not Perfect?

- That's OK. You are investing a few hours in each step, so if it's not perfect, **AT WORST**, you have wasted those few hours.
- But more likely, your imperfect efforts are merely the necessary stepping stones required for you to reach perfection.
- It's OK to go back and fix earlier steps! Do so if you need to!

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Step 4: The One-Page Synopsis

- Expand the one-paragraph summary from Step 2 into a full page.
- Each sentence in the one-paragraph summary will expand to a full paragraph in your one-page synopsis.
- You are growing out the ideas already built into the story.

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Step 5: Character Synopses

- Write a half-page or full-page description of each major character from Step 3.
- Tell the story from the point of view of each character.
- Put the resulting “character synopses” into your book proposal. Editors love them!

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Step 6: The Four-Page Synopsis

- Expand the one-page summary from Step 4 into several pages (four or five).
- Each paragraph in the one-page summary will expand to roughly a full page in your four-page synopsis.
- Make the big strategic decisions for the story.
- May need to go redo earlier steps. Do so!

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Step 7: Character Charts

- Expand your character synopses from Step 5 into full-fledged character charts.
- Write several pages about each character.
- Birthdate, description, history, motivation, goal, and everything else.
- Be obsessive here! The more work you put in here, the deeper your characters will be.

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Take A Break: Write Your Proposal Now

- You have now done enough work to write an excellent proposal.
- If you are a published novelist, you can sell this book with the proposal and some sample chapters.
- Otherwise, sadly, you'll need to write the whole novel. But it won't hurt to write your proposal now anyway, because you'll want to get some critiques on it and that takes time.

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Step 8: Sketch Out Your Scenes

- You need to make a list of all the scenes in your novel.
- Use the ideal tool for writing lists--the spreadsheet. Do not panic here. Just do it.
- Make one row for each scene.
- Make one column for each aspect of the scene.
- Spreadsheets are better than 3x5 cards!

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Step 9 (Optional): Write a Long Synopsis

- Expand each scene to one or more paragraphs.
- Each paragraph should sketch out everything you want to remember about the scene.
- What is the setting?
- Who are the characters?
- What is the conflict?

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Step 10: Write the First Draft!

- Start writing, using your spreadsheet or your long synopsis.
- You'll be amazed how fast you write.
- You'll be amazed how deep your story is.
- You may decide to change the story at some point. Go back and modify the Snowflake when this happens and then continue the first draft. It's OK to do this!

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That's the Snowflake!

- Use those parts that work for you.
- Don't use those parts that don't work for you.
- Refine the process to work for you. It's your story and your career.



Examples of One-Sentence Summaries

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One-Sentence Examples

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More Examples of One-Sentence Summaries

- A young Saudi woman on the run from her family links up with a Berkeley physics prodigy who is just learning that he can see the future--Blink, Ted Dekker.
- A young servant girl in 17th-century Holland lies at the center of a marital dispute in the home of renowned painter Johannes Vermeer--Girl With a Pearl Earring, Tracy Chevalier

One-Sentence Examples

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More Examples of One-Sentence Summaries

- A Moscow homicide detective investigates a bizarre triple murder and runs afoul of the KGB and FBI--Gorky Park, Martin Cruz Smith
- A boy raised in Afghanistan grows up with the shame of having failed to fight the gang of boys who raped his closest friend--The Kite Runner, Khaled Hosseini

One-Sentence Examples

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More Examples of One-Sentence Summaries

- A boy wizard begins his training and must battle for his life with the Dark Lord who murdered his parents--Harry Potter #1, J.K. Rowling
- A hobbit learns that his magic ring is the key to saving Middle Earth from the Dark Lord--The Lord of the Rings, J.R.R. Tolkien

One-Sentence Examples

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More Examples of One-Sentence Summaries

- A eunuch in 18th century BC Egypt must survive the palace intrigues between his owner and her evil father--River God, Wilbur Smith
- A young human girl in Ice Age Europe struggles to survive in her adoptive clan of Neanderthals--The Clan of the Cave Bear, Jean Auel

One-Sentence Examples

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More Examples of One-Sentence Summaries

- A stonemason in 12th-century England battles to build his life's dream, a cathedral--The Pillars of the Earth, Ken Follett
- A young nurse searches for the way home after time-traveling from 1945 to 1743 Scotland--Outlander, Diana Gabaldon

One-Sentence Examples

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More Examples of One-Sentence Summaries

- An orthodox Jewish artist struggles to reconcile his art, his religion, and his family--My Name is Asher Lev, Chaim Potok
- A young girl watches the turmoil in her family from heaven after being raped and murdered by a neighbor--The Lovely Bones, Alice Sebold

One-Sentence Examples

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More Examples of One-Sentence Summaries

- An autistic savant must choose whether to accept a new treatment that would make him normal and change his identity forever--The Speed of Dark, Elizabeth Moon
- A young girl grows up in the company of a strange time-traveling visitor who appears and disappears at random--The Time Traveler's Wife, Audrey Niffenegger

One-Sentence Examples

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More Examples of One-Sentence Summaries

- A young English woman from a peculiar family is pursued by an arrogant and wealthy young man--
Pride and Prejudice, Jane Austen
- A young female astronomer discovers radio messages from alien beings in a nearby star system--
Contact, Carl Sagan

One-Sentence Examples

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More Examples of One-Sentence Summaries

- A young boy is brutally trained in Battle School to be the general who will save humanity from alien invaders--Ender's Game, Orson Scott Card
- A Harvard symbologist and a female French cryptographer solve the puzzle of the Holy Grail in a race against death across Europe--The DaVinci Code, Dan Brown

One-Sentence Examples

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More Examples of One-Sentence Summaries

- In 1914, a Russian anarchist tries to assassinate the aristocrat who is negotiating his country's entrance into World War I--The Man From St. Petersburg, Ken Follett
- A brilliant young lawyer gets a fabulous job at a firm that is a cover for a Mafia money-laundering operation--The Firm, John Grisham

One-Sentence Examples

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More Examples of One-Sentence Summaries

- A British spy “retires in disgrace” as cover for a deeply laid plan to entrap the head of counter-espionage in East Berlin--The Spy Who Came In From The Cold, John LeCarre
- A Russian sub captain leads the Soviet navy on a merry chase while he tries to hand over the latest Soviet submarine to the Americans--The Hunt For Red October, Tom Clancy

One-Sentence Examples

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More Examples of One-Sentence Summaries

- An orthodox Jewish artist struggles to reconcile his art, his religion, and his family--My Name is Asher Lev, Chaim Potok

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Suggestions for More?

If we have time, I'll take some examples from the class and we can do them on the spot. It's a great exercise.



Example: The Hunger Games

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One Sentence Summary

A 16-year-old girl volunteers to take her sister's place in an arena where twenty-four teens will battle each other to the death.

Count the hot buttons:

- “16-year-old girl”
- “volunteers to take her sister's place”
- “arena”
- “battle to the death”

The Hunger Games

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Notice What's Missing

- No mention of Peeta or Haymitch
- No mention of the Storyworld
- No hint of the year or even the century
- No mention of romance
- No hint of the political intrigue
- Only tells what happens in Chapter 1 & 2!

The Hunger Games

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One Paragraph Summary

In a dystopic future America, Katniss Everdeen is a 16-year-old girl who illegally hunts outside of town to keep her family from starving. When Katniss is forced to be a “tribute” in the Hunger Games, she wrecks her chances during training **by shooting an arrow at the Gamemakers who control her fate**. Before the Games begin, another tribute named Peeta claims that he’s in love with Katniss, but once they’re in the arena, **Peeta joins forces with her enemies and they finally corner her in a tree**. After Peeta rescues her from her enemies, she and Peeta become allies and to her horror, **Katniss begins feeling real affection for Peeta**. Finally Katniss and Peeta are the two lone survivors, and must choose which will die so the other can live.

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About the One- Paragraph Summary

- This is not the same as “back-cover copy” which typically takes you only up to the first disaster.
- This tells the whole story, but it may not explain the resolution.
- One sentence of setup, three disasters, and an ending.

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The Story Setup

In a dystopic future America, Katniss Everdeen is a 16-year-old girl who illegally hunts outside of town to keep her family from starving.

- A bit about the Storyworld
- A bit about the lead character, focusing on the backstory that contributes most to her frontstory

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The First Disaster

When Katniss is forced to be a “tribute” in the Hunger Games, she wrecks her chances during training **by shooting an arrow at the Gamemakers who control her fate.**

- Focus on the lead character and what disaster or decision leads her to commit to the story.
- Early on, Katniss believes she has no chance. Here, she begins to show her fight. The reader now believes that she has a real chance to win.
- The Gamemakers like her spunk and reward her impudence with a very high score, but this makes her the target of the other tributes.

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The Second Disaster

Before the Games begin, another tribute named Peeta claims that he's in love with Katniss, but once they're in the arena, **Peeta joins forces with her enemies and they finally corner her in a tree.**

- This disaster and its aftermath change the direction of the story.
- Katniss moves from being the hunted to being the hunter in this scene and its aftermath.
- Now, Katniss is committed not merely to surviving; she's proactively trying to win by killing her enemies.

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The Third Disaster

After Peeta rescues her from her enemies, she and Peeta become allies and to her horror, **Katniss begins feeling real affection for Peeta.**

- This disaster leads the players to commit to the ending.
- When the Gamemakers begin to believe that Katniss is returning Peeta's love, they commit to manipulating the two of them into being the final pair of survivors.
- Katniss up to this point has had nothing to lose except her life, but she at least had the possibility of winning; now that she is beginning to know love, she has more to lose and she cannot win.

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The Ending

Finally Katniss and Peeta are the two lone survivors, and must choose which will die so the other can live.

- The reader has been dreading all along that this would happen.
- There is no need to explain what will happen here, although you can if you want. The one-paragraph summary is for your editor's eyes alone, so it's OK to put in a spoiler.
- However, if you can still trick your editor by leaving out some crucial information without appearing to do so, then that's OK.

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Katniss: One Sentence/One Paragraph

Katniss is the lead character, so her one-sentence summary and one-paragraph summary are the same as the one we've already given for the main story.

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Katniss: Values

- Nothing is more important than survival.
- Nothing is more important than my sister Prim.
- Nothing is more important than avoiding love, because the more people I love, the more people I have to worry about, and that's intolerable.

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Katniss: Ambition and Goal

Ambition: To stay alive.

Goal: To run and hide while the others kill each other. If somebody comes looking, run if possible, or fight if you have to.

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Peeta: One Sentence Summary

When a young man is forced into the Hunger Games alongside the girl he loves, he resolves to sacrifice himself so she can survive.

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Peeta: One Paragraph Summary

In a dystopic future America where most people are hungry, Peeta Mellark has a secret crush on a beautiful young woman, Katniss, who barely knows he exists. When both Peeta and Katniss are forced into the Hunger Games, Peeta vows to sacrifice himself for Katniss, but **his crush on her is revealed on national TV**. In the arena, Peeta joins forces with the “career tributes” by offering to help them kill Katniss, but when they corner her, **he defends her and receives a deadly wound**. Katniss nurses him back to health but then **Peeta accidentally kills one of the other tributes**, leaving him and Katniss among the three final survivors. The third tribute, Cato, captures Peeta and begins choking him to death while Katniss watches.

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Peeta: Values

- Nothing is more important than survival.
- Nothing is more important than keeping Katniss alive.
- Nothing is more important than being true to who you are.

The Hunger Games

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Peeta: Ambition and Goal

Ambition: To help Katniss survive.

Goal: To join forces with the Career Tributes by promising to deliver Katniss to them, but then to double-cross them and kill them so Katniss can live.

The Hunger Games

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Katniss: Character Synopsis

Katniss Everdeen is a 16 year old girl in a dystopic future America. She scratches out a bare living by hunting illegally with her best friend Gale. Katniss only loves one person in the world, her little sister Prim. When Prim's name is drawn for the Hunger Games, Katniss volunteers to take her place, which she knows will be a death sentence.

Katniss is particularly unhappy that the other tribute from her district is Peeta Mellark, a boy she hardly knows, except that he saved her life a few years ago when she was starving and desperate.

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Katniss: Character Synopsis continued

During the last interview before the Hunger Games begin, Peeta reveals on national TV that he has a terrible crush on Katniss, and therefore he can't win even if he survives. Katniss is furious, thinking this is a scam to make her look weak.

When the Games begin, Katniss grabs a few supplies and heads for the hills to evade the Career tributes. Late that night, she discovers that Peeta has joined forces with the Careers, and has promised to deliver her to them. She's now completely convinced that Peeta is doing his best to survive at her expense. **Can she outfox the Careers—and punish Peeta?**

The Hunger Games

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Peeta: Character Synopsis

Peeta Mellark has been desperately in love with Katniss Everdeen since the first day of school when he was five years old. His nightmare begins when Katniss volunteers to replace her sister Prim in the Hunger Games. Miraculously, Peeta's name is drawn for the Games also. He knows he can't survive because he has no killer instinct, but he vows to keep Katniss alive at any cost — even if he must lie, cheat, and even kill the other tributes.

Peeta's strategy hits a huge obstacle when he must admit his crush on national TV. Now Katniss knows he loves her, and she's furious at him for making her look "weak." Peeta must rethink. He decides to join forces with the Career Tributes by telling them he can deliver Katniss, the girl who mysteriously scored highest in the training.

The Hunger Games

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Peeta: Character Synopsis continued

Peeta's resolve is put to the test when he and the Careers discover a girl alone in the woods and attack her. Leaving her for dead, the Careers get impatient when she takes too long to die and send Peeta back to finish her off. Can he violate his own values and kill an innocent girl?

The next day, Peeta and the Careers corner Katniss in a tree at dusk. They guard the tree overnight, but at dawn, Katniss attacks them and drives them off, killing two and wounding everyone. When they finally regroup, Peeta must at last double-cross the Careers to defend Katniss, but in doing so, he's wounded so badly that he can't hope to survive. Katniss is alive, but so is the most powerful of the Careers, a brute named Cato. **What more can Peeta do for the girl he loves?**

The Hunger Games

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Cato: Character Synopsis

Cato comes from a wealthy district where it's common to train children as killing machines so as to achieve wealth and honor in the Hunger Games. Cato is powerfully built and superbly trained. He volunteers for the games, expecting to win. He is shocked and humiliated when he is outscored by Katniss Everdeen in the final week of training just before the Games begin. Katniss must die!

When Peeta Mellark, the boy from Katniss's district, offers to deliver Katniss, Cato agrees to take him in as allies with the other Careers. But Cato is suspicious of Peeta, who seems soft, and keeps an eye on him.

The Hunger Games

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Cato: Character Synopsis continued

When Cato and the other Careers drive Katniss up a tree at dusk, Cato is elated. They've got her! But at dawn, Katniss fights back with a nest of deadly tracker jacker wasps which can cause death or insanity. Cato survives the attack. When he tracks down Katniss, he moves in for the kill, but Peeta fights him off. Cato attacks savagely and wounds him, but Katniss has escaped.

Within days, Katniss has attacked the base camp of the Careers, destroying their supplies. Cato goes into a blind fury. The little witch might actually win! She can't do that. The Hunger Games belong to Cato, and he will win at any cost. When the Gamemakers announce that new supplies will be dropped at dawn, Cato lays his plans to trap Katniss. **Can he destroy her—before she kills him?**

The Hunger Games

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Haymitch: Character Synopsis

Haymitch Abernathy is the one person in District 12 who has won a Hunger Games. The Games seared his mind for life, driving him to drink to numb the horror. Every year, he must coach two losers from his district, and he hates it. He despises the Games and would do anything to destroy the Capital that imposes this horror.

When Katniss and Peeta are drawn as tributes, Haymitch sees nothing new. Two more losers who will die like sheep. Why should he waste effort trying to coach them? But they show some fight early, some spunk, and Haymitch decides he must try. Peeta can't win, but Katniss might. And Peeta is just stupid enough to sacrifice himself to help Katniss. There's a chance. Haymitch begins pulling strings.

The Hunger Games

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Haymitch: Character Synopsis continued

As the Games begin, Haymitch works tirelessly behind the scenes to line up sponsors who will pay for gifts to be dropped in on Katniss. He also knows that Katniss thinks like he does, so he can send her messages by the timing of his gifts. The problem is that the idiot girl can't see that Peeta really loves her. But at least she's smart enough to see the connection between a show of affection and the gifts Haymitch is lining up.

Can Katniss win? Maybe. As the Games continue, Haymitch pulls out all the stops to help her. But there's a new hazard. What if she wins? What if she wins in a way that causes a political firestorm? The idiot girl might win the battle and lose the war. **Please, please, please don't let her do anything stupid!**

The Hunger Games

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Cinna: Character Synopsis

Cinna is a young man raised in the Capital who secretly despises the Hunger Games and the brutal government that sponsors them. He would do anything to destroy the government, but how? Cinna is a brilliant stylist, and when his skills are required for the Hunger Games, he volunteers to work for the girl tribute from the lowly District 12.

Katniss is a great kid, and Cinna throws all his skill into helping her create a memorable image before the Games begin. He helps her overcome her stage fright by telling her to answer the TV interviewer by imagining she's merely talking to Cinna, who is just off stage.

The Hunger Games

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Cinna: Character Synopsis

Against all hope, Katniss endures in the games. Endures, wins, and in the process, puts herself in enormous danger. Now Cinna faces his most difficult task—helping Katniss walk the political minefield she's created by surviving. **Can Cinna rescue Katniss from the unspeakable hazards she barely understands?**



The Hot Seat

Randy Ingermanson

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The Hot Seat

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Some Preliminaries

- Your baby is not ugly; your baby is a baby. All babies are beautiful, but all babies desperately need to grow stronger.
- I am more terrified than you are, because I'm afraid to say something that will hurt your feelings. I'm asking forgiveness in advance, because I probably will.
- We have limited time, but I want to show you how to ask the right questions to get your creative juices flowing. We cannot solve all problems in 15 minutes.
- Play the movie to show what can go wrong.



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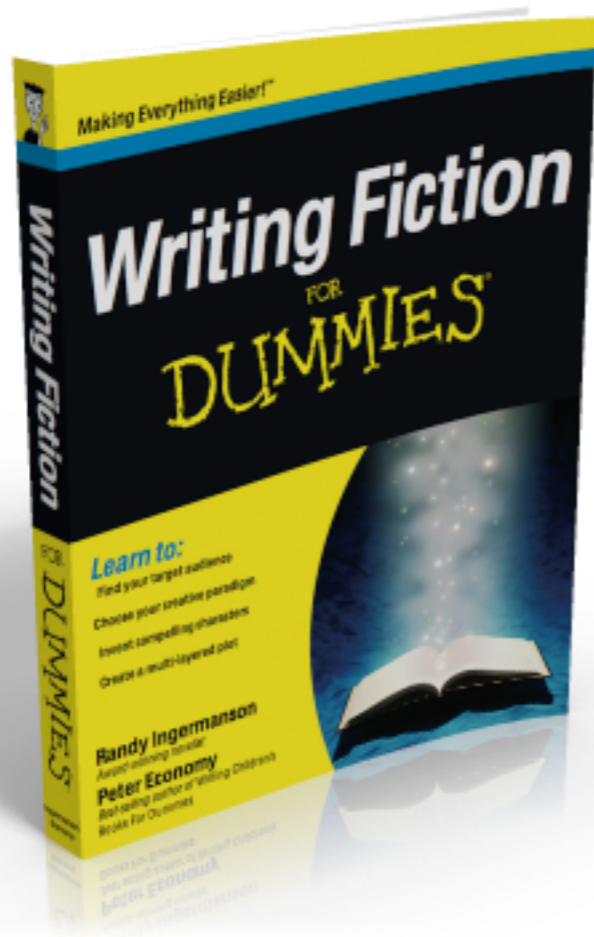
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